

# THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



PORTSMOUTH IN THE OLDEN TIME.

## MAIDEN MAY.

BY W. H. G. KINGSTON.

CHAPTER XIII.—FIRST LESSONS.

ON Miss Pemberton's return to Downside, while seated at their tea-table, Miss Mary gave her a description of her young visitor of the morning, and told her of the proposal she was anxious to make about her.

"I should first like to see the little girl," said

Miss Pemberton. "If she is really, as the dame supposes, of gentle birth, it would be undoubtedly right to try and give her some of the advantages of which she has been deprived. At the same time, we should be cautious; perhaps the dame may have been mistaken, and it will be unnecessary, if not imprudent, to try and raise her above the position in which she was born, unless she possesses qualities calculated to make her happier and better in a higher station."

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

"Well, Jane, I could only form an opinion from her sweet voice and from what she said; she is at least an affectionate child, and Adam Halliburt and his wife appear devotedly fond of her. Do you not think that we may help them by judicious training?"

"I see, Mary, that you are determined to think highly of the child, and unless we find that you are mistaken, I shall be very glad for her to come as often as her worthy protectors will allow her," said Miss Pemberton.

"I trust it will be found that I am right in my opinion of the sweet little girl," said Miss Mary, nodding her head and smiling; "I can always judge best of people by their voices, and I detected in hers that true tone which can only proceed from a true heart."

"Well, well, we shall see, and I hope that my opinion will agree with yours, Mary," observed Miss Pemberton.

Next morning Mistress Halliburt arrived with Maiden May. The little girl was scrupulously clean and neatly dressed, though her garments were befitting a fisherman's daughter, of plain and somewhat coarse materials, except that she wore the unusual addition of shoes and stockings.

"I have brought our little maiden to you, ladies, as you desired, and if you will please to tell me how long you wish to keep her I will send my Jacob up to fetch her away at the proper time," said the dame as she entered the hall into which the Miss Pembertons had come out to meet their young guest.

Miss Pemberton scanned her narrowly with her keen grey eyes before replying.

"Good morning, my dear," said Miss Mary; "come and shake hands."

May ran forward and placed her hand trustfully in that of the blind lady.

"May I lead you about the garden as I did yesterday, Miss Mary," she asked, "and tell you of the birds and butterflies and flowers I see? I shall like it so much."

Miss Mary smiled and nodded her consent to the proposal.

"Thank you, thank you," exclaimed Maiden May.

"You need not send for the child till the evening, Mrs. Halliburt," said Miss Jane, who had been watching May; "we shall not grow tired of her, I think, and she, I hope, will be happy here."

The dame went away in the hopes that Maiden May had made a favourable impression on the ladies. "The elder is a little stiff and won't win the child's heart like the blind lady; but she is kind, and maybe thinks more than her sister," she said to herself. "She won't spoil the child or set her up too much, that's a good thing, or maybe she might not like coming back to us and putting up with our ways, and that would vex Adam sorely."

The little girl spent a very happy day with the kind ladies. She led Miss Mary, as she had proposed, about the garden, and was as entertaining to the blind lady as on the previous day, while she gained a considerable amount of information tending to expand her young mind. Miss Jane commenced giving her the course of instruction she had contemplated, and Maiden May proved herself a willing and apt pupil. Her teacher was most favourably impressed by her intelligence. It is

true May did several things at table not in accordance with the customs of polite society, but Miss Jane refrained from saying anything, for fear of intimidating the little girl.

"You will observe, May, how I behave at table, and you will try, I am sure, to do as I do," she said, quietly.

May nodded, and after this so narrowly watched all her movements that Miss Jane began almost to wish that she had not made the remark. If Miss Jane helped herself to salt, so did Maiden May; when she drank, the little girl lifted her small tumbler to her lips; her knife and fork were held exactly in the same way she saw Miss Jane doing, or held daintily in her tiny hand while Susan took her plate for some more chicken.

After dinner Miss Jane gave May her first writing lesson. She had never before held a pen in her hand, and her attempts to make pot-hooks and hangers, and even straight lines, were not very successful.

"I think I could make some letters like those in a book, if you will let me, Miss Jane," she said, looking up, after surveying her performance.

"I do not want you to make such as those at present, but I will write some which you can copy."

To her surprise the little girl imitated the letters, as she told Miss Mary, with a neatness and precision which was truly surprising.

"I like to do them much better than those ugly things," said Maiden May, and she was spared the task of copying the pot-hooks and hangers, and was allowed to learn writing more according to her own fancy.

She was so happy that she thought Jacob had arrived sooner than it was necessary to take her home. She went, however, very willingly, tripping along by his side as she held his big hand, and describing with glee all she had seen and learned.

"You will soon be thinking little of our home, I am afraid, May," said Jacob, with a sigh.

May protested honestly she liked home best. Jacob felt that in a few years she would think differently. He scarcely dared to allow himself to contemplate the wide gap which would be placed between them.

Day after day May went up to Downside Cottage.

"We ought not to give you the trouble to come for your little girl, Mistress Halliburt," observed Miss Jane. "Susan can fetch her if you do not think her old enough to go by herself."

"If she were my own daughter, or any other poor person's child, I would have let her go and come back by herself long ago, but there is one living not far off, who, for reasons of his own which I cannot fathom, would, I am afraid, like to spirit her off," said the dame, mysteriously.

"Surely no one would injure the child," observed Miss Jane.

"It's no fancy of mine if I think there is," said the dame. "He came once and tried to get her from us by fair means, but we would not give her up for all his promises. But when he finds out, as he is sure to do before long, that she is with you, and coming backwards and forwards, he will be on the watch for her. He is not often here now since the war began. Adam thinks he is about no good; he does come back sometimes for a day or two, and Satan will be helping him if he thinks of mischief."

"No doubt about that, Mrs. Halliburt," observed Miss Jane. "But there is One more powerful than Satan who will protect the innocent."

"True, ma'am, but He will protect them through the means of their friends, and it's our business if we suspect evil to guard against it," said the dame.

"You are right. But who is the person of whom you speak who is likely to injure our little girl?"

"We must not speak ill of our neighbours, Miss Pemberton," answered the dame, "I know that; but if our neighbours do ill, we may warn others against them. The man I mean is Miles Gaffin, the miller, as he calls himself. Now, I cannot say exactly what ill he does, except that I never heard of his doing any good, or saying even a kind word, though he says many a bad one; but Adam, my husband, has a pretty strong notion of the sort of business he carries on, and that it's not by his mill he makes his money. There are few about here who don't stand in awe of him, and yet it would be hard for any one to say exactly why. Only one thing is certain, that if he had a mind to do a thing he would do it, and set the law at defiance. But, Miss Pemberton, you will not repeat what I have said?"

"Certainly not, dame," said Miss Mary; "but after all, I cannot say that you have brought any serious accusation against the miller, nor can I understand why you should fancy he is likely to injure our Maiden May."

"That's just it, Miss Mary, no one about here can say exactly what he does or why they don't like him; still no one does like him, and I feel a sort of tremble whenever I set my eyes on him, just as I should, begging your pardon, ladies, if I was to meet Satan himself."

"Though I still remain in the dark as to why we should be cautious of this man Gaffin, we will always keep a careful watch over Maiden May, and when you or your son cannot come for her, we will send her home with some prudent person who will take care that neither he nor any one else runs off with her," answered Miss Jane.

#### CHAPTER XIV.—AT PORTSMOUTH.

PORTSMOUTH was a busy place in those stirring times of warfare, and as the coach on the top of which Harry was seated rattled and rumbled down the High Street, parties of sailors came rolling along laughing and talking, several in their heedlessness almost running against the horses in spite of the shouts of the coachman, who had more than once to pull up to avoid driving over them. Now a press-gang passed along, dragging a number of unwilling captives to serve on board the fleet; some resigned to their fate, others with frowning brows resenting the treatment they had received, and some glancing round, hoping against hope for an opportunity to escape. Officers, in their cocked-hats and glittering epaulets, were walking quickly along, while post-chaises came driving in bringing Admiralty officials or captains to join their ships. Groups were collected in front of the different inns, and Jews were looking out for customers, certain of obtaining a ready sale for their trumpery wares. Ballad-singers—especially those who could troll forth one of Dibdin's new songs—were collecting a good harvest from eager listeners; and the apple-stall women were running a thriving trade, as were the shopkeepers of high and

low degree, judging by their smiling countenances; while the sound of revelry which came forth from the numerous inns showed that the landlords were rejoicing in the abundance of custom: in short, there was little chance of grass growing in Portsmouth streets in those days.

As Harry leaped down from his seat, he found his hand grasped by another midshipman, a handsome-looking youth somewhat taller and older than himself, who had made his way through the crowd gathered round the coach.

"I have been on the look-out for you, Harry, with a message from the captain," said the latter, as they cordially shook hands; "you are to come on board at once, for we are all at sea, and the frigate goes out of harbour this evening."

"I have to order a few things at my tailor's, and shall be quite ready," answered Harry. "How are you, Headland?" he added, taking his friend's arm, after he had given his portmanteau into charge of a porter; "I was glad to find that you had joined the Triton. As the captain knows and esteems you, he is sure to give you a lift whenever he can. We shall see some more service together, and I hope that you, at all events, will mount a swab on your shoulder before the ship is paid off."

"Your uncle will get you promoted first, I should think," answered Headland; "though I hope some day my turn will come."

"You are my senior, and have done not a few things to merit it; and Captain Fancourt is the last man to favour a relation by passing over another with greater merits."

"Come, come, you have learned to flatter while you were studying French on shore. We shall both do our duty, I have no doubt about that."

Harry having called at his tailor's, he and Headland went down to the Point, now so crowded with men-of-war's boats and wherries coming in and shoving off, marines and sailors, watermen and bum-boat women, and gaily dressed females and persons of all description, that they had no little difficulty in gaining a boat. At last they put off to the frigate lying in mid-channel, with her sails loose, ready to get under way.

Harry having reported himself, had some old friends to greet and a number of new acquaintances to make, and he soon found himself at home in a midshipman's berth.

As soon as the captain came on board, the frigate, slipping her moorings, glided out of harbour, and took up a berth near Lord Howe's fleet, which had a short time before arrived after the glorious victory of the 1st June.

Captain Fancourt having sent for Harry, gave him a kind welcome, and said,—

"You shall go on shore with me to-morrow to attend the king and queen, who are coming on board the fleet. It is the best opportunity you may have of seeing their majesties till you go to court on your promotion, which I hope, however, you will gain before many years are over."

Accordingly the next morning the captain went on shore in his boat, taking Harry with him, and pulling to the dockyard.

Never had Portsmouth harbour presented a gayer scene; every vessel afloat was dressed with as many flags as could be mustered, from the proud line-of-battle ship to the humble lighter, while banners waved from numberless flagstaffs on shore. The



quays were everywhere lined with people on the watch for the flotilla of boats which were collecting before the commissioner's house in the dockyard. The whole garrison was under arms; and the lords of the Admiralty, whose flag was hoisted on board the Queen Charlotte, and most of the ministers of state, were present.

Shouts rent the air as at length the king issued from the commissioner's house, carrying in his own hand a magnificent diamond-hilted sword, accompanied by the queen and followed by several of the princes and princesses. He thus proceeded down to his barge waiting at the steps, when, amid the shouts of the multitude and the firing of guns, he embarked with his family and attendants. The barge then, urged by the strong arms of her crew, proceeded down the harbour, followed by a vast fleet of boats, and steered for the Queen Charlotte, the most conspicuous of the ships at Spithead.

As soon as the barge arrived alongside, the royal standard was hoisted, that of the venerable admiral being shifted to a frigate, and a royal salute thundered forth from all the ships, while hearty cheers rose from the throats of the gallant crews as they stood on the outstretched yards.

On the deck of the Queen Charlotte were collected the gallant admirals and captains, by whose courage and seamanship the first of that long series of victories which contributed so greatly to England's naval glory had been won.

The king would allow no one to take the sword from him, but as soon as he reached the deck eagerly advanced towards Lord Howe. He presented it to him as a mark of his satisfaction and entire approbation of his conduct. Rich gold chains were then presented by the king to Sir Alexander Hood, to Admiral Gardener, and also to Lord Howe's first captain, Sir Roger Curtis.

"I am sorry that their wounds prevent Admiral Bower and Admiral Paisley from attending," said the king; "I must have the satisfaction of presenting them with gold chains, and as soon as medals can be cast to commemorate the victory, I will send them, that they may be attached to the chains."

It was an interesting sight when on that occasion the flower of the English navy, with the gallant men who had fought that glorious action, were presented by the venerable admiral—for Lord Howe was then seventy years of age—to the good king on the quarter-deck of the flag-ship. His majesty exhibited much genuine feeling as the admirals, captains, and lieutenants in succession came up to him. He had a kind word for every one, and one of sympathy for those who had so far recovered from their wounds as to be able to be presented.

"Who would not be ready to shed the last drop of his blood when we have our dear country to fight for, and so first-rate a king to reign over us!" exclaimed Harry, enthusiastically, to his friend Headland, for they both had accompanied their captain on board and witnessed the spectacle from a distant part of the ship.

The *levée* being concluded, the king dined with the admiral on board, and then returned in his barge to the harbour, accompanied as before by a squadron of boats.

His majesty was so eager to see the prizes captured by his fleet, that before going on shore he insisted on pulling up the harbour to have a look at them. There at their moorings lay the six huge line-of-

battle ships which had lately belonged to the republican French, now the prize of English valour: the Northumberland, Achille, La Just, Impétueux, America (the two latter the finest seventy-fours that had ever been seen in a British harbour), and the Sans-Pareille (almost equalling in size the Queen Charlotte, and noted for her swift sailing). The Vengeur would have been among them had she not sunk just after she struck her colours.

In the evening the town was brilliantly illuminated, and the next day the king attended the launch of a line-of-battle ship, the Prince of Wales. Directly afterwards, the indefatigable monarch, with the queen and princesses, rowed out to Spithead, and embarked on board the Aquilon frigate, royal salutes firing from all the ships, while the crews manned yards and cheered, and the bands played their most lively music. The Aquilon getting under way stood towards the Needles, when the king returned to Portsmouth to spend the Sunday. On the following Monday he sailed in the Niger frigate for Southampton, whence the royal family proceeded in carriages for Windsor.

Such is a description of one of the many visits the king delighted to pay to the fleets of England, so that both the officers and men of the navy were well acquainted with his person, and very many could boast of having had the honour of conversing with him.

The Triton, however, was soon to be far away from such scenes, and to be engaged in the stern reality of warfare. Her destination was the Mediterranean, and her captain and crew being eager to distinguish themselves, were constantly on the alert. Though a bright look-out was kept, and leagues of water were ploughed by her, a couple of privateers, a few merchantmen and Guada-costas, were all she captured for some time, having hitherto encountered no worthy antagonist.

Unhappily, fever broke out on board, and going into Gibraltar, she was compelled to leave thirty men at the hospital. Even after she sailed again, a considerable number remained on the sick list; indeed, almost as many unable to do duty as those left behind.

Though his crew were thus reduced in strength, Captain Fancourt continued his cruise in search of the enemy.

The Triton approaching the neighbourhood of Carthage, a number of large ships were seen hull down between her and the land. They were known to be the Spanish fleet. Their movements were watched, and they were observed standing back to port. The Triton kept them in sight, and then standing away continued cruising on the ground they had before occupied. In vain, however, Captain Fancourt watched for their return that he might carry information of their whereabouts to the admiral.

Day after day went by and not a sail was seen.

"This is vexatious work," exclaimed Harry, as he and Headland were walking the quarter-deck during the first watch, when the frigate lay becalmed about ten or a dozen miles off the coast.

"It's more than vexatious to me, who have no friends to help me, and who, unless I get the opportunity of fighting my way up the rattlings, have but little hope of promotion," answered Headland. "You, who have a father in parliament, are sure of yours as soon as you have served your time."

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"That may be the case, but I would rather gain my promotion by hard service than as a matter of favour. I am sure that you will make opportunities for yourself, and I hope to find them too, though they may not come as willingly as we may desire," said Harry. "But how is it, Headland, that you speak of having no friends? You know me well enough to be sure that I could not wish to pry into your affairs from idle curiosity; but the truth is that, being known to be your friend, I have several times been asked about you, and I have been compelled to confess that I knew nothing of your history. That has made people fancy that there is something you would desire to conceal; though as I know you, my dear fellow, to be the soul of honour, I am very sure there is nothing, as far as you are personally concerned, which you would desire to be kept secret."

"You do me no more than justice, Harry," answered Headland, in a tone which denoted honest pride, a very different feeling to vanity. "There is nothing in my history which I wish to conceal. On the contrary, I would rather have it as widely known as possible, though the fear of being considered egotistical has prevented me talking about myself. For this reason alone I have hitherto even to you never spoken about my early days, and now you put the question to me, I can scarcely otherwise account for my silence on the subject."

"You have spoken at times of a kind-hearted seaman who took care of you as a child, and of having served as a ship's-boy before you were placed on the quarter-deck, and of other circumstances which have made me suspect that your early history was not a little romantic. From strangers being present, or from other causes, I have, however, always been prevented from questioning you more particularly on the subject, and even now, as I honour you for yourself, I would not ask you to tell me anything, but that I believe it would be for your advantage, and certainly, as I said before, not to satisfy my own curiosity."

"I am sure of that, my dear Harry," answered Headland, "and I will try to give you as much of my early history as I possess myself. To do so I must exert my memory, and help it out with the information I have obtained from my early protector and devoted friend Jack Headland, whose name I bear, though I know from him that it is not my proper one. I have no reason, however, to be ashamed of the name, and therefore gladly retain it, hoping some day to make it known with honour. I confess, however, did I possess any means of being recognised, my earnest wish would have been to discover my parents and family; but as you will learn from what I am going to tell you, all possible clue that would enable me to do so has been lost, and I have therefore made up my mind to be content with my position, and to gain a name for myself."

#### ABOUT CONVERSATION.

WE Britons have never been supposed to excel as a people in the noble art of conversation. Foreigners have probably exaggerated our stiffness, awkwardness, and taciturnity, on occasions that ought to draw out into lively exercise our powers of thought and speech; but it must be confessed that we by no means equal some of our neighbours, the

French, for example, in those conversational accomplishments that are fitted at once to multiply and elevate the pleasures of society. We have had, and still have, brilliant talkers, accomplished conversationalists, who while displaying their own intellectual wealth, add delightfully to the mental stores of their hearers. But the stars of our dinner-tables and drawing-rooms are seldom surrounded with a constellation of lesser lights. A formal dinner party, from a conversational point of view, is a proverbially dull affair. The room may be bright with the lustre of glass, china, and plate; the appointments of the table, the dishes, the service, may all be excellent; the host and hostess, aided by a few volunteer or professional assistants, may laboriously strive to keep up a lively and entertaining conversation: but everything fails to give the party a free or genial character; few of the guests are really at their ease, or manage to contribute anything to the general entertainment; conversation, though assiduously whipped, is constantly flagging; "the feast of reason" is non-existent, "the flow of soul" never appears, and the party, composed, it may be, of fairly cultivated men and women, breaks up, to its own secret and unspeakable relief. The cause of this social failure is not so much want of intelligence or amiability on the part of entertainers or entertained, as want of genuine conversational skill and practice. Were the art of conversing more attended to and studied in the school and in the quiet family circle, our social gatherings and hospitable entertainments might become precious sources of intellectual pleasure instead of being, as they often are, extremely flat and unprofitable.

Good conversation is really one of the finest pleasures and most solid advantages of cultivated society. The art of skilfully exchanging thoughts and communicating knowledge is everywhere exceedingly valuable, and is always well worth a careful study. But the first thing to be studied by those who would converse well is the acquisition of a good stock of useful and entertaining knowledge. Such knowledge can only be acquired from books and personal observation of nature and human life. But the knowledge so acquired must be well-digested by reflection, and arranged in the mind with some regard to logical order. Then the stores of the well-stocked mind must be imparted in a natural and agreeable manner. The first-rate talker is neither pedantic nor superficial. His language is not stiff or professional, but it is not slovenly or too familiar. He has regard, in his talk, both to his subject and to his company; and tries to be plain without being shallow, to interest his audience without paying them the doubtful compliment of expounding first principles. He does not always, however, avoid the danger of monopolising the conversation, or of turning dialogue into monologue. Coleridge, one of the most wonderful talkers England has produced, spoke by the hour to an admiring or wearied circle, and was disposed at last almost to resent a word timidly put in by a questioning listener. Macaulay, another talker of immense mental wealth, acquired the same monopolising habit, and often poured out his extraordinary stores in one continuous stream; though, as Sydney Smith observed, he had occasionally his "brilliant flashes of silence." Carlyle, also, is, or at least was, a talker of the first magnitude, having at one time, as Christopher North said of him, "mounted the throne of Coleridge." His "Latter

Day Pamphlets," we have been assured, were spoken before they were written and published; and it is well known that "true Thomas," as his friends sometimes call him, very frequently forgets the silence which he calls golden, and vehemently resorts to the current silver of speech.

Sir James Macintosh, a man of immense and varied attainments, delighted and excelled in conversation. We were once told by one who knew him well at Bombay, and often shared his hospitality, that his dinner parties generally consisted of eight gentlemen, including himself, and were famous for the talk that went on at them under his skilful presidency. He would not allow the knights of his round table to indulge in any private conversation, or to break up into those small knots or parties that so often spoil the fellowship of a good company. All were expected to take part in the debate or discussion that was going on, and thus to contribute to the common stock of knowledge. One important topic was quietly started after another, and not dismissed till it had been discussed with tolerable success. Sir James never could have stood the superficial way in which subjects of interest are treated at a modern dinner-table, where everything like thoughtful discussion or serious argument is looked upon as quite out of place. Round his genial intellectual board conversation was carried on in a style that informed and never wearied the guests. When a new number of the "Edinburgh Review," or any publication of interest, reached him from Europe, he discussed its contents with his friends in a style that never failed to delight them all. The wit and humour of Jeffrey and Sydney Smith, the mathematical lore of Playfair, the political disquisitions of Brougham, or a new poem of Scott, all contributed to the delight and instruction of the social hour, and enabled Sir James to make himself a model of hospitable skill, which in these days is too seldom imitated.

Speaking of the conversational powers and habits of certain great authors, we are reminded that the greatest of our poets seems to have been ready and skilful in conversation. In his encounters of wit with Ben Jonson at the Mermaid, Shakespeare usually came off victorious. His wonderful mind was as prompt as it was wealthy. His faculties were powerful beyond all comparison, yet he could use them as nimbly as an accomplished swordsman uses his weapon. Shakespeare's greatest contemporary, Lord Bacon, who has told us that "speaking makes a ready man," seems to have been excellent in conversation. He did not, indeed, could not, hide that wealth of mind with which he was so wondrously endowed. Dryden, also, was in his club—a favourite coffee-house—a conversational king. "Glorious John" talked in a style worthy of his talents and reputation, and wielded thereby a literary sceptre over a host of willing subjects. His great successor on the poetical throne, Pope, could be very brilliant in company as well as with his pen; but he was too artificial in his style and habits to excel in that frank expression of genial thought that marks the true conversationalist. Addison, the "Atticus" of Pope, completely failed as a public speaker, and seems to have been oftener dumb than eloquent in general society. It is somewhat singular that a great author, whose writings so often resemble the best conversation, made no figure as a talker. But not a few men have been so accustomed to use their fingers in expressing their thoughts, that they appear

to lose the ready use of their tongues. How many of our public writers, engrossed with the daily demands of the press, care little about, or neglect to cultivate, the noble faculty of speech. They are eloquent and powerful in one line, and leave it to "professed talkers" to exercise their sway in another.

But Addison's successor, Dr. Johnson, great with his pen, was perhaps still greater with his tongue. Indeed, Johnson, by universal admission, was the foremost talker of his day, and he intensely enjoyed the high colloquial art in which he excelled. In the renowned Literary Club, of which he was the chief ornament, he ruled with something like despotic conversational sway. Burke alone could meet him with any prospect of success on the field of argument. That illustrious Irishman seems to have been as great in the club as he was in the House of Commons. He certainly inspired the surly yet kindly lexicographer with salutary respect. It was when dealing with ordinary members of the club, none of them mean men in their day, that Johnson's conversational superiority appeared, and enabled him to reign without a rival near his throne. How easily he could upset in a discussion poor Boswell, or Goldsmith, still poorer in a conversational point of view, and at whom Garrick launched the terribly humorous line—

"Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor poll!"

Johnson had every accomplishment of the formidable talker, a vast store of miscellaneous knowledge, a retentive memory, a ready wit, and a love of argumentative discussion. But he was choleric and impatient of contradiction, and, under real or fancied provocation, rude even to violence. We should like to hear of good and great talkers springing up among us, but we want no more Dr. Johnsons. Modern conversation should be pervaded with that "sweet reasonableness" which need not be deficient in energy while it indicates the presence of refinement.

Good conversation should by no means be confined to literary, political, or high social circles. It ought to be common in every cultivated English home, and the prized accomplishment of every class of society. But, like other accomplishments of the kind, it must be acquired and perfected by study. It strikes us that at a certain stage of their education boys and girls might be taught to converse with ease on subjects with which they have been made tolerably familiar. Conversation, well directed, might become a powerful means of exercising their intellectual powers, and a delightful way of adding to their stock of knowledge. Young people, by a systematic yet easy exchange of thought and information, may greatly benefit one another, and acquire that self-possession and fair fluency of speech which are so necessary in every province of human life. At our public schools and at the universities the art of conversation is now, we are glad to learn, much studied and practised. Conversation parties are very common, and greatly relished both at Oxford and Cambridge. They bring young intellects into friendly collision, they help to elicit truth by discussion, and enable every one both to give and to get a portion of intellectual wealth. They also serve to loosen the tongue, which in so many Englishmen seems to be utterly tied when they are expected or attempt to speak in company.

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Parents may do much to encourage in their children the faculty and the love of good talking. By such talking we do not, of course, mean mere glibness of tongue, or the clever use of ordinary words. Young people should be taught to think and reason as well as speak, and to use conversation as an important means of exercising and educating their minds. Yet in teaching them the art of conversation, certain dangers have to be carefully avoided. They must be warned against formality and pedantry, and everything priggish or conceited. Especially must they be taught to shun as a pestilence that frivolity of speech and manner which infests at present almost every class of society. The use of slang terms, another vice of the day, should be regularly discouraged. A certain indulgence in slang of the least objectionable kind may perhaps be occasionally tolerated, for even many of the best and cleverest of young people have an almost irresistible propensity to use what has been called "the wit of schoolboys." Yet plainness and purity of speech are excellent things which mark the true lady and gentleman. These the young should learn and the old should never forget.

The kind of conversation that generally goes on, even in polished and cultivated circles, has often been satirised; and it shows, we fear, few symptoms of improvement. The talk at an ordinary dinner-table and in most fashionable drawing-rooms would make a very poor appearance in print. It is really wonderful how long clever and amiable people can be in one another's company without uttering one fresh idea, or discussing any common topic in an original style. The most insipid remarks, the most commonplace thoughts, the most superficial observations, often form the staple of the conversation even in houses from which idle gossip and everything in the shape of slander are studiously banished. There is none to lead the talk, or, if a leader appears, there are none to follow. A remark of any depth or originality, timidly hazarded at "a party" by some person who has been reading and thinking on some important subject, has a startling or freezing effect. Nobody has anything to say in the way of recognition or reply, and the sudden silence makes the speaker almost feel that he has been thought guilty of a breach of good manners. A young gentleman fresh from the university, on hearing a scholarly observation from any person at table, immediately whispers "shop" in the ear of a pretty, and not very literary young lady sitting near him. A "finished" young lady will stare as if shocked or astonished on hearing a sentence quoted from Bacon's "Essays," or a couple of lines from "Paradise Lost." This fashionable repugnance to anything like solid conversation is a bad sign of English society. It springs from stupidity or sheer affectation, if it be not indeed one of the worst fruits of the reigning frivolity of the day.

Cowper, in one of his most humorous poems, well hits off some of the absurd sorts or semblances of conversation that abound in many English social, or unsocial, circles. An old French chronicler said that "the English amused themselves in a sad sort of way;" and the way in which we English converse is often sad enough, if not actually ludicrous. Let any one recall the conversations he has often listened to, or taken part in, among educated people, and he will find little reason to congratulate himself or his friends upon the use made of excellent opportunities

of refined enjoyment. After we have been engaged for an hour or two in desultory talk in the course of a precious evening, conscience will often prompt the questions, What has it all been about? What idea of the least value have we either imparted or received? Have we been in earnest about anything, except, perhaps, the weather and the private concerns of some of our neighbours?

With rare felicity Cowper describes conversers and conversations which are quite common at the present day. His wholesome satire was never more needed than now, and we would like to send our readers to the perusal, or reperusal, of his "Conversation." Denouncing the fierceness of some kinds of wordy war, he exclaims:—

"Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,  
A duel in the form of a debate!"

Then passing from the ferocious to the timid and hesitating talker, he tells us:—

"*Dubius* is such a scrupulous good man,—  
Yes, you may catch him tripping if you can,  
He would not with a peremptory tone  
Assert the nose upon his face his own.  
His evidence, if he were called by law  
To swear to some enormity he saw,  
For want of prominence and just relief,  
Would hang an honest man and save a thief."

Then your positive people are thus well characterised:—

"Without the means of knowing right from wrong,  
They always are decisive, clear, and strong.  
Where others toil with philosophic force,  
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,  
Flings at your head conviction in a lump,  
And gains remote convictions at a jump."

Who has not been afflicted in society with prolix and prosy story-tellers, who touch nothing they do not spoil, and who, in relating an anecdote or describing an adventure, enter into all the miserably small details, as if determined to leave nothing to the imagination or experience of their hearers? The poet thus touches up such well-meaning but afflicting personages:—

"But sedentary weavers of long tales  
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.  
'Tis the most asinine employ on earth  
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,  
And echo conversations dull and dry,  
Embellished with—He said—and so said I."

And then he gives some excellent directions to all story-tellers:—

"A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct,  
The language plain, the incidents well linked;  
Tell not as new what everybody knows,  
And, new or old, still hasten to a close."

The following is much more appropriate now than it was even in the poet's day:—

"The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,  
Makes half a sentence at a time enough.  
The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,  
Then pause, and puff, and speak, and pause again.  
Such often, like the tube they so admire,  
Important triflers! have more smoke than fire."

The following picture will remind most people of what they have often felt and seen:—

"The emphatic speaker dearly loves to oppose,  
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,  
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,  
Touched with the magnet, had attracted his.  
His whispered theme, dilated and at large,  
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge."

But quotations of this kind might easily be multiplied; for the poet's observation is as comprehensive as his satire is just and strong. After describing with happy humour and skill an ordinary English evening party, which has thousands of counterparts among us at this very day, he thus concludes in words we can all feelingly appreciate:—

"The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,  
As from a seven year's transportation home,  
And there resume an unembarrassed brow,  
Recovering what we lost, we know not how,  
The faculties that seemed reduced to nought,  
Expression, and the privilege of thought."

J. D.

### Grandmother's Song.

THE Grandame sits at the cottage door  
Dreaming, singing, sighing;  
The children lie on the cottage floor  
And watch her needles flying,  
And catch the words that fall from her lips  
In rambling rhyme and story,  
While spring the lights in the harbour ships  
And fades the sunset glory.

Many a song of war and pain  
Singeth the aged mother—  
The strife for love, the strife for gain,  
Of men with one another:  
Of dauntless sword on fiery fort,  
Unconquered 'mid the burning;  
Of ships that gaily sailed from port  
And ne'er were seen returning.

And many a song of joy and peace  
She crooneth softly after,  
Of wounds that heal, and tears that cease,  
And happy fireside laughter;  
Of patience long and pardon sweet,  
And faith of love undying.  
The children whisper at her feet,  
"Say, Why is granny crying?"

They look in each other's wondering eyes,  
And turn away to ponder.  
Out in the burning western skies  
Lieth the great world yonder.  
And each young soul has chosen here  
A verse of Grandame's story,  
To sing through many a coming year  
Of patience, might, or glory.

The aged mother sleeps at last;  
Hushed is the children's prattle;  
For one has sailed before the mast,  
And one is gone to the battle;  
And one in the cottage sitteth long  
To keep the hearth-light burning,  
And hopeth well, and prayeth strong  
For wanderers home returning.

Oh, feeble voice that crooneth low,  
While babes are idly playing,  
Of human pain, and human woe,  
And Christ's dear love repaying,  
What power is thine of song and sigh  
To set heaven's music ringing,  
To strike the key-note loud and high  
That chimes with angel singing!

How many a soul that toils amain  
Because the toil is glorious,  
And fights with sin, and fights with pain,  
And still comes forth victorious,  
Can see through dreams of long ago  
On life's dim threshold yonder  
The aged mother crooning low  
The babes who hear and ponder!

R. M.

### THE COVETOUS MAN AND THE WORLD.

(A DIALOGUE.)

THE following is from a prose translation by the late Rev. Mackintosh Mackay, LL.D., from the Gaelic of "Rob Donn," or Robert Mackay the Brown, a peasant poet of Sutherland. Rob was unable either to read or write, and his poems, which are still popular in the Highlands of Scotland, were taken down at his dictation by a Highland minister. The poet lived in the earlier part of the last century.

#### *Covetous Man:*

Thou art ungrateful, World! for thou dost ill  
Uphold the man that binds his soul to thee!  
And when his hands with riches thou dost fill  
Thou fillest, too, his heart with vanity;  
And when the cord 'twixt him and thee seems tied  
Thou lettest thine end go,—he falleth in his pride!

#### *World:*

Thou art ungrateful, Man! for be it told  
Thou wouldst not court a world that followed thee,  
To sell thy soul for its polluted gold!  
Upbraid me not, for thou desertest me!  
I prop thee up with riches,—but the ground  
Just opens under thee,—and thou no more art found!

#### *Covetous Man:*

Oh keep me, World! and I'll conform to thee,  
For all I love is found beneath the sun!  
And why for ever wilt thou torture me  
That I am ne'er content with what is done?  
Oh keep me yet from Death's dread gloomy shore,  
And Heaven itself may go—than Heaven I love  
thee more!

#### *World:*

It is thy duty, Man, to set thy mind  
On things of greater weight than earthly store!  
Thou bleedest ever 'neath my yoke unkind  
And yet thou clingest to me more and more.—  
I rear the miser for a time—but, lo!  
When Death's dark pageant comes—I smile,—and  
let him go!

ANGUS M. MACKAY.





*From the Painting by Quintin Matsys]*

THE MISERS.

[at Windsor Castle



## MATTHEW MORRISON: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER VI.—OUR FIRST LODGER—COUSIN BRAIDFUTE'S HOUSEHOLD, AND MANNER OF TRAINING CHILDREN.

THE lodger that we obtained through Mr. Kemp's recommendation was a Mr. Meggat, for many years chaplain in one of the principal town institutions. We were fortunate in getting him for our first lodger, when we were new to the business, for a more quiet, inoffensive inmate could not be, and he was as polite and ceremonious to my mother, and even to Nelly, as a lord.

He took a fancy to me, and often invited me into his parlour in the evenings, where he would read his poems to me and ask my opinion of them, boy though I was. Sometimes we would walk together in the meadows. I often think of our conversations during these walks. No dreaming boy has a greater faculty of building castles in the air than had worthy Mr. Meggat, who was past middle age, and whose hair was already streaked with grey. He wished to be of service to me, and he was so, though not in the way he supposed—for, with all his little weaknesses, he was a sincere Christian and a perfect gentleman. It was fortunate for me that at a time of life when impressions are easily made upon the character, I was so much in the company of Mr. Meggat. The society of a cool, clear-headed, selfish man of the world is, I am persuaded, far more dangerous to a young lad than that of the most enthusiastic and romantic of visionaries.

Cousin Braidfute and Mr. Meggat never drew well together. The former openly expressed his contempt for our little lodger's somewhat finical niceness and refinement; and the latter's nerves were shocked with Mr. Braidfute's rude address and overbearing manners. Cousin Braidfute took it upon himself at last to reprove my mother for allowing me to be so much in Mr. Meggat's company.

"He will fill the lad's head with nonsense," he said, roughly, "and he will be taking to the reading of novells and poetry-books instead of learning his lessons; especially," added Mr. Braidfute, with severe emphasis, "as I know from experience that he has an aptitude for these inventions of the devil already." Mr. Braidfute had not yet forgiven the episode of the "Gentle Shepherd."

"My father approved of my reading a certain class of poetry, Mr. Braidfute," I ventured to say; "and he himself was a great admirer of Spenser and Herbert."

I suppose Cousin Braidfute had never heard of either before; but he answered with a snarl, "Then, my lad, I hope he repented of it in time. The psalms of David and Erskine's gospel sonnets are poetry enough for any man."

These sonnets are unexceptionable in point of doctrine; but as to poetical merit!

Archie's spirit was roused by this attack on Mr. Meggat and me, and he defended us manfully.

"Mr. Meggat's company," he said, "would harm no one, for he was out and out a gentleman; and as for Matthew, there was not a lad at college who was more painstaking with his lessons: and if he did read poetry at a time, what was that to Mr. Braid-

fute? what right had he to interfere with Matthew, or with anything in our mother's house? It would be fitter if he would set himself to rule his own."

And Archie shook back his curls, as was his custom when excited, and looked very fiercely at Cousin Braidfute.

My mother and I were greatly frightened by Archie's boldness, though I could not help admiring him for it; and especially by the insinuation contained in his last words, which Cousin Braidfute could not help wincing under; and indeed he was never so rude in Archie's presence afterwards. The fact was that this man who was so stern and dictatorial in his neighbours' habitations, was quiet enough in his own. He was domineered over, not by a wife—which is no uncommon circumstance—but by his own hired servant. She was a high-spirited woman, and had gradually managed to get the upper hand of him soon after his wife's death. Though groaning under this subjection, he had not courage to free himself from it, but lived on from year to year in a kind of abject slavery that would have been pitiful if it had not been contemptible. Moreover, he had a mind to marry again, it was understood, and more than once had progressed a certain length in courtship; but Mistress Marget kept a jealous watch over his movements, and always succeeded in nipping his matrimonial projects in the bud.

It was a strange retribution that this man, who so roughly browbeat his equals, and in some respects his superiors, should be forced to tremble before a serving-woman. Cousin Braidfute, indeed, was scarcely to be recognised in his own house. He would fain have concealed his infirmity from us, and was very chary of his invitations even at the time of our arrival in Edinburgh, when in our unsettled state a little hospitality would have been desirable. But it could not be hid—we had not been a week in town before we discovered it; and truly it afforded us no small diversion—that is, Archie and me, for my mother was only shocked at the man's weakness.

As his relations we were particularly obnoxious to Mrs. Marget, and she conducted herself so uncivilly to my mother on the only occasion on which she called at the house, that she determined never to enter Cousin Braidfute's door again while the woman remained in his service. Archie and I suspected that she was jealous of my mother's designs upon Cousin Braidfute, but we could not have hinted such a thing to my mother, knowing the extreme indignation and disgust it would have caused her. She had gone to the house to see little Sarah Braidfute, his only child. She was about eight years old, and remarkably sharp and observant for her age. Unhappily situated she was, poor thing, having a severe parent, and being entirely under the care of an unprincipled maid-servant, who set her an example of low cunning and evil temper, and made a perfect drudge of the child. I do not think, however, that the woman constantly maltreated her—even she had her blinks of good-humour; but it was easy to see that Sarah

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stood in great awe of her. The effect of this training was that little Sarah Braidfute was sly, selfish, and untruthful; that she disliked home, and seemed never at ease in her father's or Marget's company. Her father was a tyrant in her eyes, always gloomy and dreadful. It was a frequent boast of his that his child dared not disobey him; but she did, and with Marget's connivance. This we learnt from Sarah herself, who was frequently permitted to spend Saturday afternoons with us; Marget not interfering, owing, I suppose, to the freedom it procured her. The child soon discovered that we might be trusted, and she chattered freely to us about the ways at home; and, indeed, it was often grievous to us to observe what evidences she gave of a prying and unchildlike disposition.

We were much shocked when we first discovered that she was a thief. We had occasionally missed trifling articles before then, but supposed that they had fallen aside, as Nelly was honesty itself; no one suspected Sarah of taking them. Nelly, like most young women, was fond of a bit of finery, and had treated herself to some yards of sky-blue ribbon to make bows and strings for her best cap. She put the ribbon into one of the kitchen drawers till she had leisure to make it up. On the following Saturday Sarah Braidfute came to the house in the forenoon, and my mother having sent to obtain her father's permission, kept her to spend the day. The child was in and out of the kitchen twenty times during the course of the afternoon. She was in the habit, indeed, of entering all the rooms; but when Mr. Meggat and our other lodgers were absent, my mother, fortunately, had been in the habit of locking their room doors, lest Sarah should disarrange their books and things.

Nelly's work was soon over, all our lodgers having gone that day to the country; so when she had cleaned up, she went to the drawer for the ribbon. We were all in our parlour—Sarah occupied with a picture-book that I had looked out for her—when Nelly appeared at the door.

"I beg your pardon, mem," she said, "but ye didna see a ribbon in one of the kitchen drawers?"

"No, Nelly, I did not," said my mother.

"I thought ye might hae put it some other place, or mistaen it for something else, mem," said Nelly, evidently disappointed by the answer.

"I am quite certain I did not, Nelly," said my mother; "but I will come and help you to look for it. Perhaps it has fallen behind the drawer," and she laid down her seam and went to the kitchen, for she had a great value for Nelly.

In a few minutes she returned. "Sarah," she said, "you were often in the kitchen to-day; did you see anything like a small paper parcel lying about?"

"No," answered Sarah, apparently engrossed with her pictures.

"It's very extraordinary," said my mother; "Nelly is positive to having seen it in the drawer this morning."

"Has there been any stranger in the kitchen, mother?" I asked.

"There's not been a soul there to-day," she answered, "except Mrs. Moffat's lassie in the afternoon with the pennyworth of sweet milk. Nelly took her in to give her Mr. Meggat's cream-can that she had left yesterday."

"Can she have taken it?" I suggested.

"I cannot tell," said my mother, reluctantly; "I never saw anything but honesty about the girl, and she has often been in the kitchen before—besides, Nelly was there all the time."

"But Nelly might turn her back for a moment, and then Lizzy Moffat might whip it out of the drawer, if it was open," said Sarah, here glibly putting in her word.

"Well," said my mother, looking much annoyed, "I must speak to Mrs. Moffat about it, for if the girl is a thief it's a duty to tell her mother. You're quite sure, Sarah, that you never saw it?"

"No, I never saw it," said Sarah, boldly.

"It's really a most distressing thing," continued my mother, sitting down after making a thorough search through the room, the only result of which was the disturbance of Archie's books and papers; "and it is a serious matter to tell a decent woman that we suspect her daughter to be a thief; besides, what proof have we that it was Lizzy?"

"It was her—I'm sure it was just her," said Sarah, eagerly.

"Have you any reason for thinking so?" I asked, surprised by the child's words and manner.

"Oh! I'm just sure it was her, that's all," answered Sarah, colouring.

"But it's not right to say so, Sarah," said I, "unless you have good grounds for it. Did any one ever tell you that Lizzy Moffat is a thief?"

"Yes, they did, though," replied Sarah, but her voice shook somewhat, I noticed, and she did not meet my eyes.

I just then happened to look at Archie—he had been writing at the table till interrupted by my mother's search, and paying no attention to what was going on. He was now gazing fixedly at Sarah, and this caused me also to regard her more attentively. She grew very red, and was evidently uneasy under his examination.

"Mother," said Archie, pointing impressively to Sarah, "*she* has got it."

"I haven't," said Sarah, angrily.

"But I know you have," said Archie, pushing back his chair and rising; "give it up this moment."

"I never took it," said Sarah, running into a corner and beginning to cry.

"Archie, Archie!" said my mother, reprovingly. She thought him harsh.

"I tell you, mother, she has got it," said Archie, looking with strong disgust upon Sarah; "I have been watching her face for some minutes, and I am persuaded that if you search her you will find the ribbon."

Here followed a great outcry from Sarah. "I didn't take it—I tell you I didn't take it," she screamed.

My mother was distressed; she could not believe what Archie so positively asserted; no child could utter such falsehoods, fallow as the ground here had lain.

"Sarah, you surely cannot be telling lies?" she said, anxiously.

No, Sarah would not confess; the former outcry was still repeated, and even in a more excited key—"I didn't take it—I tell you I didn't take it."

"Archie, you must be mistaken," said my mother, apart to him.

"I tell you, mother, she has got it," repeated Archie, shaking his head energetically at Sarah.

"It's not possible," said my mother, but she became very pale.



"Look in the bosom of her frock," said Archie—"see how she keeps her hand there!"

But to do so was beyond my mother's power. Sarah kicked, screamed, and struck fiercely at us when we attempted to approach her. She was like an infuriated wild animal when driven to bay; her eyes glittered, and her skin, between anger and fear, was crimsoned to the very roots of her hair. It was shocking to see a child in so excited a state. The noise was so great that it brought Nelly in alarm from the kitchen, and we all stood grouped round Sarah, looking anxiously at her.

"I cannot do it, Archie," said my mother, who was trembling with agitation; "and besides, it's not possible that a child of that age could tell such lies. Leave her alone or she will be ill."

I agreed with my mother that Archie must be wrong, and, like her, I was afraid for the child's health. But Archie had more penetration than we. He said nothing more, and presently left the room, leaving Sarah still sobbing violently in her corner with the aspect of one unjustly accused, while we three regarded her with troubled faces, and vainly endeavoured to soothe her. Archie returned in a few minutes; his hat was in his hand.

"Well," he said, addressing Sarah, who suddenly ceased her crying at sight of the hat, and became very still and watchful; "well, do you mean to confess yet?"

She did not answer, but she breathed quickly, and looked from the hat to his face with keen apprehension.

"Because if you do not," continued Archie, "I mean to bring your father here, and we shall see if he can make you," and he turned towards the door.

"No, no, no," shrieked Sarah, beating the floor with her feet in the extremity of her terror, "no, no, no!"

"Did you take it?"

Still she did not answer; her eyes glanced from him to us, round the room, and then back to him irresolutely.

"I shall give you only one chance more," said Archie; "and if you do not now confess, I shall have your father here in ten minutes. Sarah Braidfute, did you take the ribbon?"

"Yes," murmured the child.

"Give it to me!"

She put her hand into the bosom of her frock, and pulled out the crumpled blue ribbon; but instead of giving it to him, she threw it spitefully upon the carpet. Archie picked it up and gave it to Nelly, who, I suppose, wished she had never bought it.

I shall never forget the expression of my mother's face, as for some moments she stood motionless gazing on Sarah. If a tender lambkin had been suddenly transformed before her into a lion or tiger, she could scarcely have appeared more dismayed; she looked with actual dread on the child.

"Such wickedness, such hardened wickedness!" she ejaculated at length; "and in a bairn only eight years old!" Then seizing her by the shoulders, my tender-hearted mother shook her heartily. "Sarah Braidfute," she said, "how durst you steal that ribbon, and then accuse another of it! Do you know what the Bible says about lying?"

The child struggled out of my mother's grasp, and then lifting up the corner of her pinafore began plaiting it with her fingers, while she glanced

stubbornly and defyingly through her dishevelled hair into my mother's face.

"I believe the bairn is actually possessed," said the latter, who had never met with such a child as Sarah before; "what are we to do with her, Archie?"

"It's the training at home, mother," said he; "and as you cannot alter that, you had better let her alone."

"Sarah," I said, taking her hand, and trying to speak gently, for, shocked though I was, my heart was grieved for the motherless child—"Sarah, do you not know that you have done a very wicked and a very cruel thing?"

She drew her hand away and looked sulkily at me for a moment, but did not speak.

"We are sorry to find you capable of this, Sarah; are you not sorry and ashamed yourself?"

She only pouted her lip, and tried to look as if she did not heed me.

"But what's to be done about this, bairns?" said my mother, earnestly; "it cannot be allowed to pass."

"You'll not tell my father?" said Sarah, suddenly breaking down, and beginning to cry. The child's training had been completely that of fear.

"I must tell him, Sarah; it would not be right to conceal it from him."

"I'll not go home; I'll run away, then," screamed Sarah.

"Do you hear the bairn? Archie and Matthew, do you hear the bairn?" exclaimed my mother, with uplifted hands.

"He'll thrash me, he'll thrash me with the big horsewhip," sobbed the child.

"Mother," said I, in a whisper, "is it possible that he would strike her with a whip?"

"I cannot tell, Matthew," she replied, in the same low key. "John Braidfute is a severe man; but who can believe what the child says now? Sarah," she said aloud, "are you telling another lie? I am sure your father would never use you in that way."

"But he does, though," said Sarah, crying violently; "when he's angry he locks me into his own room, and then takes out the long whip and lashes me."

"I cannot believe it," said my mother, horror-struck.

"But I can believe it," muttered Archie.

"He thrashed me last Monday," said Sarah, quick to observe the effect which her words had produced, "and I've the marks yet on my legs."

"Let me see them," said my mother, who now doubted every statement Sarah made.

The child instantly sat down on the floor and pulled off her shoes and stockings, and sure enough, there on her legs were the discoloured marks of several severe lashes.

"Eh me! eh me! the brute that he is!" cried Nelly, sinking on her knees beside the child, and gazing pitifully on the marks.

"If I had but the lashing of him!" exclaimed Archie, drawing in his breath and clenching his fists.

"Whisht, Nelly, whisht, bairns!" said my mother, in an admonitory voice, as she stooped down, and, with no ungente hand, began to put on Sarah's stockings again; "it's not right to speak that way of her father before the bairn, it's her duty to respect him."

"Well, that's true, mother," said Archie; "but I

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don't think I shall ever be so severe again to that child; such a mode of correction would make a fiend of me."

"Will you promise never to steal again, Sarah, if I consent not to tell your father this time?" asked my mother.

Sarah was as ready to promise as she had been to lie. The most discouraging thing about the child was that this exposure seemed to cause her little or no shame, the fear of punishment alone moved her.

"I am afraid I am doing wrong in not telling him," continued my mother, "but I cannot see my way clear. Remember, Sarah, that if ever I hear of your taking what does not belong to you, or of your telling lies, I shall have to let your father know about this. Sirs! to think she may be taken up for shop-lifting yet, for it may come to that. Bairn, are you in the habit of stealing?"

As was to be expected, she was about to deny it. "Take care, Sarah, you had better tell the truth," I said.

"Whiles," then said the child, and this time she hung down her head and looked somewhat ashamed. "Sirs!" again ejaculated my mother; "and has your father ever found it out, bairn?"

No, he had not, but Marget had, she told us. Marget often threatened to tell her father of this, and about her playing with Hetty Millar and Jessie Barlas, if she refused to do her errands. "Marget makes me work for her," said the child, who was still seated on the carpet, looking up with a preciously cunning expression into our faces, "and if I'm not for doing it, she makes believe to go ben to my father—but I know she winna," bursting into a laugh.

"Would it not be better for yourself, Sarah," said I, "to be careful never to do anything that you would be afraid of your father hearing of?"

"Oh, but it's so dull at home," said the child, "and Marget winna let me into the kitchen when her friends come to see her. I ken what for," she added, with a strange look for a child's face, "she doesna want me to hear what they say about father; but I can hear it all in the pantry when I like."

"Have you no story-books that you could read in the parlour, Sarah?" said I, for we gave her no encouragement to speak of these things.

"Father never gives me any," said Sarah; "besides, Hetty and Jessie live on our stair, and are always wanting me to play with them."

"Why does your father forbid you to play with them?" I asked. "Are they bad girls?"

"He says their fathers are seceders and schismatics," replied Sarah, looking up with a half-intelligent, half-bewildered expression. She had to repeat the last word several times before we understood her, she pronounced it so ill. Archie and I burst into a laugh, but my mother was very grave about it. "It was grievous," she said, "to see such uncharitableness among professing Christians." And then she tried to impress upon Sarah's mind the duty of attending to her father's wishes.

"Oh, but I hate my father," said Sarah, heedlessly. We were shocked to hear the child say this; but as we sow, so we reap.

Sarah was at length sent home under the care of Nelly, and we were left to discuss what had happened in a very disturbed state of mind. My mother finally resolved to speak to our relative on the impropriety of leaving the child so much in the company

of Marget; for Cousin Braidfute was the ruling elder in the congregation he belonged to, and was so energetic in looking after its concerns that he had no time for those of his own house. He had also become a town-councillor, and, as it was said, coveting the still higher honour of being a bailie, he was most indefatigable in his attention to public business, and never lost an opportunity of arguing every question that came before the council board, to the annoyance of his less pugnacious colleagues.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF A LONDON PHYSICIAN.

NO one comes in contact with so many and various notable personages as a London physician in good practice among the "upper ten thousand." This was pre-eminently the case with the late Sir Henry Holland, Bart., whose death occurred in the autumn of last year. He has left behind him, in his "Recollections,"\* a most interesting record, not only of a singularly full and active life, but of many members of the highest circles of society, who were eminent either by their rank or for their prominence in the worlds of politics, science, or literature. That these memoirs might have been even more entertaining than they are we can easily see. A sense of honour and fidelity is always compelling the author of the "Recollections" to lay his fingers on his lips. Doubtless, if he had not been a man possessed of this proper sense of the respect due to others and to himself, he would not have been trusted so far, and have seen so much, and the reader may often congratulate himself on being admitted at all to a privacy which is often, for the demands of his curiosity, too strictly kept.

From the year 1814 Sir H. Holland commenced a habit of making an annual foreign tour. He was an excellent sailor to begin with, unconscious of sea-sickness, able to read and write in all weathers, and never tired of gazing on the sea, though a deep and long sleeper on board ship. There was scarcely a corner of Europe with which he was not familiar, and he also made more than the usual pilgrimages of Eastern travel, besides several times crossing the Atlantic. Wherever he went he saw the chief people, and took notes of what he saw and heard. He is careful to inform his readers that his habits of yearly travel did not interfere with his professional success; and he says he resolutely limited his income from this source to the very handsome figure of £5000 a year, as being as much practice as he could accomplish with satisfaction to himself and benefit to his patients.

Before his book is buried under the load of newer Biographies and Memoirs, let us glean a few of the recollections and anecdotes. It is not a work for ordinary review or notice, the chief interest lying in the personal narrative, of which a fair idea can be given only by a selection of extracts. Nor are his "Recollections" confined to English society.

Reverting to the year 1806, he thus speaks of Sir Walter Scott:—"I still hold in happy memory the little suppers (a meal now lost to social life) at his house in Castle Street, of which he himself was the soul and spirit; his countenance, heavy in its ordi-

\* *Recollections of Past Life.* By Sir Henry Holland, Bart., M.D., F.R.S., D.C.L., President of the Royal Institution of Great Britain. Longmans.

nary aspect, kindling suddenly into life and merriment at the racy Scotch stories, which he ever had at hand to point and illustrate the matter of converse, whatever it might be. Many of these, as he told them, might have been transferred almost literally to those wonderful novels which were at this time but in embryo existence. A little political sarcasm now and then stole into his conversation, but rarely if ever showed itself in any harsh or ungenerous personality—a feeling alien, as I believe, to his nature, though I have heard him accused of it. Frequently too, at this period, I saw him when listening with enthusiastic enjoyment to ‘Lochinvar’ and other of his ballads, set to music and sung to him by Miss Clephane (afterwards Lady Northampton), with the fine accompaniment of her harp. This made a picture in itself. It was the poet revelling in the musical echo of his own poetry.”

Sir Henry’s description of his acquaintance with Maria Edgeworth, and his long correspondence with her, terminates thus:—

“Her letters to me would in themselves have formed a volume. One of the last she ever wrote was after reading the first volumes of Macaulay’s ‘History.’ I showed it to Lord Macaulay, who was so much struck with its discrimination and ability that he begged me to let him keep it. A few days afterwards a letter came from her family to tell me of her death!”

How much more interest would have been excited if Sir Henry had given the reader a copy of the letter itself!

With reference more particularly to professional life in London, we find the following:—

“One of the six Prime Ministers whom I have attended professionally was Mr. Canning, my relation to whom became that of friend as well as physician. It is pleasant to me to recall, through the haze of intervening years, my many conversations with this most accomplished man on literary or political topics—such conversations often occurring when he was confined to his couch by gout or other illness. One of them, turning upon his favourite poet Virgil, is more strongly impressed on my memory, from his presenting me at the moment with a copy of his own (a French edition in three volumes, 1754) lying on the table before him. He wrote his name, with mine, in each volume. This was immediately after a dangerous illness in which I attended him in 1825. There was a charm in his fine countenance enhancing that of his conversation, and felt by all who knew him. His voice well harmonised with these endowments—an influence itself always powerful, in private even more than in public life, surpassing that of mere beauty, and often surviving when all beauty is gone.”

This sketch is followed by a strange story of mental aberration. A gentleman, once holding an official position, having called in Sir H. Holland, asked the doctor to “save him from himself,” telling him that he felt himself oppressed by a propensity to kill Mr. Canning, and had taken his present lodgings in order to accomplish this design. To this strange illustration of the theory which is founded on the “duality of the brain,” the author refers more than once.

The following description occurs of Mr. Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley:—

“With Lord Dudley, as Mr. Ward, I had long been intimate both at home and abroad. The latter part of his life was clouded by circumstances which called upon me painfully in my double capacity of friend and physician. The organic disease of brain, eventually the cause of death, produced in its earlier progress many aberrations of intellect and temper, more striking from their conjunction with wit, learning, and intellectual power. Some of these aberrations, particularly those connected with his unconscious habit of *thinking aloud*, became the anecdotes of the day. They first gave me serious alarm when sitting alone with him in his drawing-room in Park Lane on that night during the progress of the Reform Bill of 1832, when the mob committed their outrages on his house, knowing him as one of the opponents of the Bill. He showed no personal fear, but the manner of his agitation betokened mental disorder which rapidly augmented upon him after this time, ending as I have already stated. I think it worthy of notice as a psychological fact, that his various eccentricities abated much in degree during his tenure of the Foreign Office; a relief he manifestly felt himself. The exigencies of party threw him out of this office, but he quitted it reluctantly. He was a man singularly impercipient of natural beauty or grandeur. I recollect to have once been with him on the pinnacle of the Duomo at Milan, without being able to extract a single phrase of admiration for the wonderful view that lay around and beneath us.”

He refers to Huskisson, to King Leopold, Baron Stockmar, and then, after mentioning Napoleon, makes the following observation:—

“My relation to his nephew—the remarkable man since sovereign of France—has been of nearer kind. It began in the spring of 1831, when, without other intimation, I was one day summoned hastily to a house in Holles Street, and found there a young man suffering under severe gastric fever, and a lady hanging over his bed. This was Prince Louis Napoleon, with his mother Queen Hortense—just arrived from Paris, and the illness of the prince seriously aggravated by the conditions of a secret and anxious journey through a country interdicted to him and his family. His recovery, the result of a good constitution and great calmness of temper, was more rapid than I at first expected; and they left England as soon as his ability to travel was well assured. I saw much at this time of Queen Hortense; and felt, as others had done, the charm of her voice and manner, made more touching in this instance by the illness of her son, and the strong affection subsisting between them. She lived but a few years longer.”

Amongst foreign statesmen he mentions Talleyrand, Pozzo di Borgo, Guizot, Drouyn de Lhuys. He gives an amusing notice of the Princess Lieven, and the “absurd tyranny” exercised by the lady leaders of fashion of the day with regard to admissions to Almack’s. He says he has seen “more than one case defying medicine cured by a ticket for Almack’s opportunely obtained.” Of such maladies and such patients as these we may imagine Sir Henry Holland exclaiming, “*O si sic omnes.*” He relates of M. Thiers, that one day, when breakfasting with the Belgian minister, the author being present, the French statesman, having read in a French newspaper a report of a speech by the Prince President at the opening of a new line of railway,

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started up, exclaiming, "This means mischief;" and started off for Paris directly. This was very shortly followed by the *coup d'état* of December, 1851.

He proceeds to mention Mr. Everett, of the United States; Daniel Webster, whom Sydney Smith described as "a steam-engine in trousers;" and Jefferson Davis; and then gives the following remarks on Prince Talleyrand:—

"My intercourse with Talleyrand was chiefly at Holland House, where I frequently met him at dinner, a meal to which he came with his animal appetites keenly awake to enjoyment. His face and figure have been often described. If I were to speak of them as they were when I knew him, I should simply say they were indescribable. His portrait at Holland House is placed between those of Mackintosh and Romilly; a contrast as strange as were the characters of the men. It could hardly have been mere casualty which gave it this position. His conversation also was cast in a mould of its own, very unlike anything else—short, pithy sentences, poignant in their sarcasms upon men and events, witty without effort or the assumption of being so. . . .

"The *bons-mots* of Talleyrand have been often recorded; some of these indeed fathered upon him though coming from earlier sources. Wholly absorbed in the physical pleasure of eating, he spoke little during dinner, and little in the early stages of digestion. This devotion to the single real meal of the day he did not seek to disguise. Later in the evening his eloquence, if such it might be called, broke out; and more than once I have listened to him until midnight with unabated interest. His power of simple narrative was extraordinary. It was a succession of salient pictures, never tedious from being kept too long before the eye, and coloured by an epigrammatic brevity and felicity of language peculiar to himself. Two instances occur to me at this moment—one a description, sarcastic chiefly, yet with some passing touches of pathos, of the death-bed of Louis XVIII, at which he was officially present—the other a vivid sketch of the several marshals of the French army who gained fame and title in the wars of Napoleon—the latter contradicting in many points the current opinions founded on the various histories and bulletins of the time. If I rightly remember, Marshal Mortier was the one whom he mentioned with greatest respect. I do not recollect ever to have heard him speak of Napoleon otherwise than incidentally, and with little commentary added. That he read his character truly and thoroughly cannot be doubted. That he had no love for him was equally certain. Political convenience only could have overcome the repulsion of two minds so incongruous in every particular; and such convenience was, in fact, their actual relation in public life."

From the notices of Lord Sidmouth, Lord Stowell, and Lord Melbourne, we must pass to the following:—

"The death of Lord Palmerston is still so recent an event, and his public character has been so amply eulogised, that I should not have touched upon his name, had I not been able to add one or two traits less generally known, characteristic of this remarkable man. One of these, of which I had frequent professional knowledge, was his wonderful power of *mastering*, I might call it *ignoring*, bodily pain. I

have seen him, under a fit of gout which would have sent other men groaning to their couches, continue his work of writing or reading on public business almost without abatement, amidst the chaos of papers which covered the floor as well as the tables of his room. As a patient he was never fretful, but obedient in every way except as to this very point. And here indeed, though I at first remonstrated against these unusual labours during illness, I soon learnt that such remonstrance was not only fruitless but injudicious. To Lord Palmerston work was itself a remedy. The labour he loved 'physicked pain.' No anodyne I could have prescribed would have been equally effectual in allaying it—or, as I may better say, in lessening that *sense* of suffering, which is always augmented by the attention of the mind directed to it."

Not less interesting are the notices of Lord Aberdeen, the late Bishop of Exeter, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Althorp, and Cobden; though of such recently well-known men little of outward appearance and manner needs as yet to be told. Of Coleridge Sir Henry does but faintly repeat the famous picture given by Carlyle in his "Life of Sterling;" and with regard to Wordsworth he touches only on the increasing complacency with which the amiable founder of the Lake School of poetry surveyed his own productions.

Of Byron, Moore, and Campbell something new may perhaps be gleaned from the following observations:—

"I happened to be in London when Lord Byron's fame was reaching its height, and saw much of him in society. It was one of those whimsical spectacles; periodically occurring, where an idol is suddenly set up by hands which afterwards help as assiduously to take it down. Though he was far from being a great or ambitious talker, his presence at this time made the fortune of any dinner or drawing-room party for which it could be obtained, and was always known by a crowd gathered round him, the female portion generally predominating. I have seen many of these *epidemic* impulses of fashion in London society, but none more marked than this. There was a certain haughtiness or seeming indifference in his manner of receiving the homage tendered him, which did not however prevent him from resenting its withdrawal—an inconsistency not limited to the case of Lord Byron. Though brought into frequent intercourse by our common travels in the East, my intimacy with him went little beyond this. He was not a man with whom it was easy to cultivate friendship. He had that double or conflicting nature, well pictured by Dante, which rendered difficult any close or continued relations with him. To his fame as one of the greatest of English poets I could add nothing by any tribute of mine. It is a fame of the kind which will be augmented rather than diminished by time.

"My long recollections of Moore and Campbell are somewhat saddened by the gloom which came over the latter years of these two men, whom I saw in the days of their decline as I had done in those of their greater prosperity. The differences of character, national as well as personal, were strongly marked; but there were some circumstances in common, impairing alike the happiness of both—pecuniary need more or less constant, and a morbid

sensitiveness to the opinion and admiration of the world. To this was added, in Campbell, a fastidiousness of taste, which gave exquisite point and polish to his poetry, but rendered composition laborious to him, even in those shorter pieces which seem struck off in the fervour of the moment, and by which he will be best remembered hereafter. Moore had more wit, ease, and elasticity, and with his Irish temperament better confronted the cares of life. But he too endured the heavy penalty, common to so many, of fame and fashion gradually passing away—a change which few can bear with equanimity. His journals curiously indicate what I repeatedly witnessed in my own house and elsewhere, his morbid sensitiveness, when singing his Irish ballads, to the effect they produced on those around him. In the most touching passages his eye was wandering round the room, scrutinising jealously the influence of his song."

Of Rogers, with his sarcastic sayings hidden under honeyed phrases, and his cadaverous countenance, much has been written already. Sir Henry adds:—

"His dinners were fashioned in the same artistic mould as his poetry—the society small and select, the cookery superlative; no candles on the table, but light thrown from shaded lamps on the pictures around the room, each a small but consummate gem of art. As a specimen of these dinner parties, I can remember one where I met Walter Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Crabbe, Luttrell, Lockhart, and I think my friend Henry Taylor, now the sole survivor of the number."

## Sonnets of the Sacred Year.

BY THE REV. S. J. STONE, M.A.

### SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

"When much people were gathered together, and were come to Him out of every city, He spake by a parable. . . . And His disciples asked Him, What might this parable be? And He said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."—St. Luke viii. 4, 9, 10.

**H**IS word goes through the world. Great is the throng

That, round the Anointed Minstrel of the things  
Eternal, gathers still. What time He sings  
His mystic lay they hang upon His tongue  
With curious ears. "A very lovely song!"  
Surely the Singer singeth well," they cry,  
With easy smile or sentimental sigh,  
And go their way, still steadfast in the wrong.  
Alas, the music of Emmanuel,  
That is so sweet and dread, if they that hear  
Close heart and will, for all their open ear  
And bland approval, breathes not Heaven but Hell.  
There are that hear and do; to whom alone  
The mystery of that music is made known.

\* "And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."—Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

## Varieties.

**BUILDING WITH ROTTEN BRICKS.**—The "Times," in one of its dogmatic leaders, reviewing the ever-changing politics of France, pronounces that Government can never be stable till they rest on the broad basis of the popular will. "The misfortune of France has been that her statesmen have always been intent upon building up some rigid organisation which could not yield; but being unable to destroy the moving force which lies at the bottom of national existence, the only consequence has been that every change has compelled a complete upsetting of all that had been built to last for ever." Now the real fault lies not in the governors but in the governed, not in the architecture of the successive "constitutions," but in the materials of which the structure is composed. While so large a proportion of French people are either Popish or Atheist, no stability can be secured. While the materials are rotten, political architects and builders will continue to labour in vain. The true hope for France lies in the revival of faith in the Bible as the basis of social as well as spiritual life.

**UNSEARCHABLE RICHES.**—Eighteen centuries have not sufficed to bring men to a complete and final understanding of the whole teaching of Christ. Every day more profound truths are discovered in his divine thoughts, in his sublime words. The deeper they are sounded, the more unfathomable seem their depths. The innumerable studies, and the preachings yet more numberless of which they have been made the subject, have deprived them of none of their glory and beauty, which seem, on the contrary, to augment with time, and which shine forth with fresh lustre whenever the breath of adverse criticism has sought to tarnish them."—*Reuss's "Christian Theology."*

**"FREE LAND."**—Without touching the political questions involved, it is well to have a clear definition of this phrase, which has come into common use. Mr. Bright being asked what he meant by "free land," thus replied:—"It means the abolition of the law of primogeniture, and the limitation of the system of entails and settlements, so that 'life interests' may be for the most part got rid of, and real ownership substituted for them. It means, also, that it shall be as easy to buy or sell land as to buy or sell a ship, or, at least, as easy as it is in Australia and in many or in all the States of the American Union. It means that no legal encouragement shall be given to great estates and great farms, and that the natural forces of accumulation and dispersion shall have free play, as they have with regard to ships, and shares, and machinery, and stock-in-trade, and money. It means, too, that while the lawyer shall be well paid for his work, unnecessary work shall not be made for him, involving an enormous tax on all transactions in connection with the purchase and sale of lands and houses."

**NEW GUINEA.**—Captain J. Moresby, of her Majesty's ship *Basilisk*, has recently made some interesting and valuable discoveries on this hitherto mysterious coast. Inside Yule Island a good harbour, named by him "Robert Hall Sound," was surveyed. A magnificent double harbour was discovered inside the Fisherman Islands, and named "Port Moresby." Here rich gold-bearing quartz was found. The utmost confidence prevailed between the visitors and the inhabitants, who are a light-coloured Malay race, of a friendly and quiet disposition. Scarcely a weapon was seen. The natives of this part of Daudai were unacquainted with the use of iron; their houses are built on poles, and the men invariably chew the betel nut. The extreme south-eastern shore of New Guinea proves to be, not as previously supposed wedge-shaped, but forked. Three large islands lie off the mainland, and are respectively named Moresby, Hayter, and Mourilyan Islands. The whole of the country is fertile and beautiful in the extreme. The natives possess great agricultural skill, lofty mountains being cultivated by them to the very top for yams and taro. Whilst harmless to strangers, they appear to be occasionally addicted to cannibalism among themselves. A noble channel, fit for a thousand Great Easterns to sail through, was named China Straits, as Captain Moresby believes that this will eventually become the highway for the route to China from Australia. The gallant captain erected a flag-staff, hoisted the Union Jack, and took formal possession of these islands on behalf of her Majesty. In consequence of this the place where the *Basilisk* anchored was named "Possession Bay." Great excitement prevails in Australia respecting these important discoveries.

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